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XR PER Montville, Joseph V.

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R 031648Z SEP 69
FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4629
AMEMBASSY BENGHAZI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 2177

SUBJ: STATUS OF MONTVILLE AT BAIDA

REF: TRIPOLI 2169

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEWED BY DATE 12 JUL 1982
RDS or XDS EXT. DATE
E.O. AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED RELEASABLE ☑
RELEASE DENIED ☐
FA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

1. ACCOMPANIED BY MACK, I MET WITH TWO LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES RCC THIS AFTERNOON RE STATUS OF MONTVILLE AT BAIDA. ONE WAS LT AL-HUUNI, WITH WHOM I MET IN THE PAST, AND THE OTHER WAS A CAPTAIN WHO DID NOT IDENTIFY HIMSELF. AFTER DESCRIBING PROBLEM OF MONTVILLE IN BAIDA, I ASKED WHETHER STEPS COULD NOT BE TAKEN AT ONCE TO BE SURE THAT HE WOULD BE ABLE TO LEAVE RESIDENCE AND GO FREELY TO EMBASSY OFFICE. BOTH ARMY OFFICERS APPEARED SURPRISED THAT MONTVILLE WAS STILL UNABLE TO DO SO AND ASSURED ME STEPS WOULD BE TAKEN EARLY TOMORROW TO FACILITATE HIS TRAVEL BETWEEN RESIDENCE AND OFFICE. LT AL-HUUNI STATED HE FULLY UNDERSTOOD IMPORTANCE OF MISSIONS BEING ABLE TO CONTINUE OPERATIONS AT THIS TIME. ALSO EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATIONS FROM LIBYA TO OUTSIDE WORLD.

2. I THEN NOTED TELEX COMMUNICATIONS WITH BAIDA HAD BEEN INTERRUPTED AND THAT I WOULD APPRECIATE RESTORATION SINCE RETURN OF MONTVILLE TO BRANCH OFFICE THERE WOULD BE OF LITTLE VALUE UNLESS WE COULD COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER. AFTER SOME DIFFICULTYIN EXPLAINING NATURE OF TELEX SYSTEM, BELIEVE BOTH OFFICERS FINALLY UNDERSTOOD PROBLEM. LT AL-HUUNI ASKED WHICH DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT HAD HAD JURISDICTION IN MATTER AND WHEN WE IDENTIFIED PTT, HE TOOK NOTES AND ASSURED ME SERVICES WOULD BE RESTORED.

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CAPTAIN HEN INTRODUCED IMPORTANT QUALIFICATION, NAMELY, THAT ALL MESSAGES MUST BE IN THE CLEAR AND NOT RPT NOT IN CODE. HE EXPLAINED THIS EXCEPTION AS REQUIRED BY THE POLICY BEING FOLLOWED TOWARD OTHER EMBASSIES IN LATTERS' COMMUNICATIONS OUTSIDE LIBYA. (DUTCH CHARGE TOLD ME THAT HE HAD FINALLY BEEN ABLE TO TELEPHONE THE HAGUE THIS MORNING, BUT WAS REQUIRED COURTEOUSLY TO USE ONLY ENGLISH. DANISH CHARGE SAID HE HAD HAD THE SAME EXPERIENCE IN CALLING COPENHAGEN.) LT AL-HUUNI NOTED THAT THEY CANNOT RESTRICT AMERICAN EMBASSY IN SAME WAY BECAUSE "YOU HAVE OTHER COMMUNICATION FACILITIES THROUGH BASE". WITHOUT AGREEING WITH RATIONALE OFFERED BY LIEUTENANT OR REPLYING TO HIS COMMENT RE WHEELUS, I SIMPLY REPLIED, "YOU ARE IN CONTROL".

3. MY IMPRESSION WAS THAT STEPS WILL BE TAKEN TO ASSURE MONTVILLE'S MOBILITY STARTING TOMORROW. BOTH OFFICERS EXPLAINED THAT IT WAS TOO LATE TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT PROBLEM THIS AFTERNOON. HOWEVER, SHOULD BENGHAZI STILL HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE APPROACH WITH ITS RCC CONTACT, SUGGEST YOU DO SO IN EVENT THAT TRIPOLI RCC REPS MAY BE REQUIRED FIRST TO CLEAR MATTER WITH ANYHIGHER-UPS BENGHAZI.

4. DURING COURSE OF MEETING, BOTH OFFICERS INDICATED CURFEW WOULD BE LIFTED FROM 0800 TO 1600 HOURS TOMORROW.
BLAKE

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